



## UN gets first female Timorese driver



» UNDP Photo/ Renato Da Costa

As the first woman to become a driver for the United Nations in Timor-Leste, Ligia Tavares Correia hopes that she will be able to learn many new things in her day-to-day work life.

"I was happy and proud when I was given the responsibility of becoming a driver for this huge institution. I've never had anything like this in my life. I know I am the only woman at this moment working as a driver, but this will not dampen my spirit and dedication to my work." The idea of women as an undervalued group in the community actually encouraged Ligia to become a driver.

"I knew that a lot of people would talk about the fact that I wanted to become a driver. On this, I would like to say that, whatever the role, women are also capable, and women are able to compete with men in this era of

globalization." Ligia wants to encourage her fellow women to believe in themselves and to take on roles that are currently dominated by men.

She has taken a big step for the development and participation of women in Timor-

Leste, even though her role is just as a driver. Mikiko Tanaka, the UNDP Country Director applauds Ligia's achievement. There is always a pioneer that opens up new horizons for the world to progress. Ligia is that pioneer for the United Nations and the broader society in Timor-Leste, to open up this area of employment often thought of by many as only possible for men.

UNDP management and the male co-drivers will work together with her to create the example and acceptance for other women in the future to enter into this profession."

Ligia worked for the Police Traffic Unit in Dili in 2002. But only a year later she was not able to continue in her position because of family reasons. This decision had a significant impact on her life and role as a mother to one boy and three girls.

Ligia was in a difficult position; however she never stopped believing that she could find an alternative to support herself. Seeing that there had been economic development in the period following the crisis in 2005 and 2006, she began performing simple tasks at a carpenter's workshop in Bidau Lecidere, which usually employs up to five men. Feeling that this work did not have sufficient financial benefits, she decided to seek work which would use her skills as a driver. Despite knowing well that this type of work was typically done by men, Ligia nevertheless submitted her application to UNDP.

As far as her experience went, Ligia was certainly the most appropriate candidate for the position of driver, and for that reason she was selected by UNDP.

"I learned to drive with my father in 1984." Ligia said, on her first day of work at UNDP. Ligia, as a female driver, feels that there should be opportunities for both men and women in this type of work. "Why can't women become drivers?" Ligia asks, in response to talk in the community that it is not possible for women to do 'men's work'.

Ligia's questions are at the fore of discussions in society regarding the participation of women in the development process. The community's understanding of the role of women is that they should be obedient to men, and that the work of women is to stay at home looking after the children and doing housework. This culture has been handed down from generation to generation.

Ligia said that the biggest obstacle she faced was her understanding of English, the official language of the United Nations institution. "Nobody is born perfect, neither men nor women. Everything is gained through a process of learning. Even though I am not perfect, I feel that I can learn this language."

Ligia's self-assurance is a positive example for other women that they can do anything they want to if they believe in themselves and seek to learn about things that they do not yet know.

Ligia Tavares Correia, who is 39 years old, comes from Ermera. In her free time she participates in normal community life, and helps her eldest son, who runs the small family business, delivering teak wood, that she had started before coming to work as a driver for UNDP.

## Heavy rains cause mass flooding in five districts

UN provided transport support for aid delivery



» UNMIT Photo/Martine Perret

Recent rains caused heavy flooding in five districts in early August. A government team from the National Disasters Operation Center (NDOC) was sent to Manufahi, Ainaro, Viqueque, Covalima and Manatuto to assess the damage. IOM provided road transport support for the government team; in areas that were unreachable by road, UNMIT provided air support to reach the affected communities.

On 9 August, NDOC finished the detailed assessment of all districts except for Covalima, which is still ongoing. The assessment showed substantial damage to infrastructure and crops and identified 30 affected aldeias, 1044 affected families and 146 severely damaged houses in Viqueque, Manufahi, Ainaro and Manatuto. Some initial assistance- rice and other emergency supplies- has been given to affected families in Natabora, Manatuto District.



## Police unite with community to clean up youth centre



» UNMIT Photo/Bernardino Soares

**U**N and PNTL police officers recently took part in a project to clean-up the Comoro Youth Centre. The centre, an active playground and educational facility, is being used as a dumping ground for rubbish, animals and unwanted waste.

Police officers from the Comoro Community Policing and Humanitarian Unit worked with the Child and Youth Centre to clear the rubbish. Other community members, including Mr Edward Reinhardt, Director of Makikit Hardware and Mr Domingos Soriano, supervisor of the Dili District Sanitation

Department, supported the effort by providing spades, rakes and rubbish bins. Mr Reinhardt also provided labour and materials to replace a section of the wall and mending of the front gate. Mr Soriano organized for rubbish to be removed and to arrange a fortnightly rubbish collection.

“It is a good opportunity for us to cooperate with Police officers and the community to clean and create this collaboration for our future. I hope that the community will appreciate and throw rubbish in the available bins, said Ms Guterres, Director of the Child and Youth Centre.”

Sergeant Sonny Iosefo, project leader for the clean-up project, said that he believed “the aim of this clean up is not only for the community, but also to work together towards a common goal and build relationships between youth, police and the community. The youth are the future leaders of our nation. Learning is easier when the environment is clean.”

## International Year of Youth

**T**imor-Leste has one of the youngest populations in the world with more than half of all Timorese under the age of 18.

With such a young and growing populace, Timor-Leste must determine what role youth will play in nation and state building processes.

In an effort to harness the energy, imagination and initiative of the world’s youth in overcoming the challenges facing humankind, the UN has proclaimed an International Year of Youth starting on 12 August 2010.

Next week’s Lia-Naroman will feature the national events to celebrate the International Year of Youth.



» UNMIT Photo/Antoninho Bernardino

## New border pass system ease travel for local communities



» UNMIT Photo/Martine Perret

**A** new border pass system designed to ease travel procedures for local residents was launched in late July between Timor-Leste and Indonesia.

The multiple entry passes, valid for 10 days and extendable for up to 20 days, will improve the economy of border towns, facilitate legal movements of border populations and strengthen bilateral cooperation between the two nations.

**N**ew x-ray machines have been placed in Batugade along the border between Timor-Leste and Indonesia.

The equipment, provided by the Government of Japan, will allow customs officials to detect the presence of high-value electronic equipment inside vehicles and prevent the loss of tax revenue caused by illegal smuggling of these items.

In the coming year the x-ray equipment will also be installed in Pasabe (Oecusse), Tunu Bibi (Bobonaro) and Salele (Suai).

## Timorese Muslims start Ramadan



» UNMIT Photo/Martine Perret

**T**he Muslim holy month of Ramadan started on Wednesday, 11 August.

Ramadan is the month of fasting, where Muslims abstain from eating or drinking between daybreak and sunset.

Ramadan, which is a symbol of forgiveness, solidarity and tolerance, is a great source of inspiration for peaceful coexistence.

Timor’s small Muslim population worship in six mosques located in Dili, Liquica, Baucau, Lospalos and Manufahi.



» UNMIT Photo/Cristovao Guterres



## Listen to Futuru Nabilan

UNMIT’s regular radio programme every Saturday at 5:30pm and Sunday at 6:00pm on RTL and 15 community radios

## Watchba pás

UNMIT’s regular TV programme every two weeks on Monday at 7:30pm on TVTL